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What an American
Diplomat said about

Missions and Missionaries in China

An American Diplomat on Missions in China

What a United States Minister to China said about Missions and Missionaries

SOME time ago a clergyman called at the Church Missions House to explain why he did not intend to comply with a request to urge his congregation to larger effort on behalf of missions. Briefly, his explanation was this: That most of his people believe that the Chinese outbreak of 1900 was due to interference with native religions, and that therefore the missionaries, and the Board which appoints them, ought not to receive further financial support. Just why this opinion, even if it were based on fact, should be an excuse for refusal to support the Church's mission among the white people, or the Indians, or the Negroes of our own land, was not explained. There seemed little use in arguing the question. If people will insist upon misinterpreting facts, perhaps the most that can be done for the present is to hope that they may be given repentance and better minds. Those who desire the testimony of an eye-witness to strengthen their own con-

viction, if it needs strengthening, and to correct the error of those who know all about the pernicious (?) influence of Christian missions upon the Chinese, will be interested in some remarks made shortly before his lamented death last January, by the Hon. Charles Denby, for several years United States Minister at Peking. As the representative of his Government abroad, Mr. Denby conceived it to be his duty to acquaint himself fully with missionary work in China. He visited all of the larger and many of the smaller mission points. Wherever he went he inspected every station. He entered the schools and examined the work of the missionary teachers and their pupils. He went through the missionary hospitals. He attended missionary conferences, and, unlike many of those who consider themselves competent to pass judgment upon missionary work abroad, he actually attended Church services, and he met the missionaries in their homes. As a result, he became convinced that the missionaries have not received their proper due at the hands of the world.

What the Missionaries Do

MR. DENBY summed up his observations by saying: "They are doing good work. They merit all the sup-

port that philanthropy can give them. In China the missionaries are the leaders in every charitable work. They give to the natives largely out of their scanty earnings, and they honestly administer the alms of others. When famine arrives —and it comes every year—or the rivers inundate the soil with never ceasing frequency, the missionary is the first and the last to give his time and labor to alleviate suffering. They are the writers of books for the Chinese. They are interpreters for them and the Legations. The first graduates of the finest Western colleges supply and practise surgery—an unknown art among the Chinese. They fight the demon opium. About their religious work I have only this to say, that he who teaches Christianity teaches modern civilization. They have crowded schools and churches. They make converts—many of them. There is backsliding in China as there is backsliding here; but the general trend of progress goes on."

The Missionary as a Trade Promoter

"THE merchants, the seamen, the diplomatists and the consuls have done much to open up China to commerce," he continued, "but the missionary has also done his share. Therein comes in

our worldly interest—the interest of the non-religious man, of the merchant, the carrier and the manufacturer. It must be admitted that civilization promotes trade —that the more a nation becomes civilized the greater are the wants of the people. Then, if the missionary promotes civilization, he also promotes trade. When he opens a school he opens also a market. Inspired by holy zeal, he goes to countries that were never trod by the merchant's foot; and, soon, our textiles, our iron, our flour, our coal oil and many other things, are regularly bought by eager customers. To the missionary all these results are subsidiary to his holy purpose. His supreme object is to convert the heathen, and the colleges, the schools, the doctors, and the charity are but means toward this end."

We quote these words not because the missionaries need them, but because people at home need to know how the work of missions is regarded by the men who have the best right to express an opinion because of their personal investigation. Those who know anything at all of the facts know that the missionary is the most popular and respected of foreigners, because he lives with the people, speaks their language, enters into their life and understands their point of view. When riots

occur, it is natural that the missionaries should be the first to suffer because they occupy the most exposed points. People who try to fasten the blame on the missionaries forget that the despatches from well-informed and authoritative sources in China at the time of the Boxer outbreak made no such unsupportable statements.

Facts Concerning the Church's Work in China

The field assigned to the Episcopal Church embraces a large part of the valley of the Yangste River, extending 1,000 miles from Shanghai to Ichang in Central China, and about 150 miles north and south on either side of the river.

This field is divided into two missionary districts:

1. Shanghai, which embraces the province of Kiangsu, population about 25,000,000; Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Frederick R. Graves, D.D.

2. Hankow, which embraces the provinces of Nganwhei, Hupeh, and portions of Hunan, and Kiangsi; population about 80,000,000. The bishopric at present is vacant, owing to the recent death of the Rt. Rev. James Addison Ingle.

The Work and the Workers

In the District of Shanghai there are central stations at Shanghai, Soochow, Wusih, and Zangzok, with out-stations at a number of smaller places.

In the District of Hankow there are central stations at Hankow, Wuchang, Ichang, Wuhu, Nganking, Kiukiang, Changsha, Shasi and Hsinti, with out-stations at a number of smaller places.

The staff for both districts numbers twenty-two American clergymen, seven physicians and thirty-nine teachers and other workers. There are also twenty-six Chinese clergy and 162 other Chinese helpers.

In addition to churches and chapels, six boarding-schools for boys and girls and five hospitals for men, women and children are maintained.

The present appropriation for the support of work in both districts is $95,729. The Chinese communicants at the present time number about 1,500; the baptized members about 3,500.

The work is producing excellent results. Greater progress is being made now than ever before. Our missionaries have to deny requests from the Chinese to open new stations because the present staff is too small to meet all the opportunities for work.

This leaflet may be obtained from THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York, by calling for Leaflet No. 974.

All offerings for missions should be sent to Mr. GEORGE C. THOMAS, Treasurer, Church Missions House, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York.